

APPROVED 8/2/04

TOWN OF WESTFORD

PLANNING BOARD

MINUTES

DATE: July 6, 2004

TIME: 7:00 P.M.

PLACE: Millennium School

PRESENT: Michael Green, Andrea Peraner-Sweet, Peter Fletcher,
Robert Shaffer, Fred Palmer

OTHERS

PRESENT: Norman Khumalo-Assistant Town Manager, Eric Fahle-
Chairman, Conservation Commission-Mike Hall-Rizzo
Associates (Gutierrez Company), Beverly Woods-NMCOG,
Richard Barrett-Highway Superintendent, Audience Members

OPEN FORUM

Master Plan Implementation Committee – Green announced that reappointments will be made at the next meeting.

Community Preservation Act Committee – Shaffer announced that on June 29, 2004 the Committee made recommendations for the upcoming fall town meeting.

WESTFORD TECH PARK WEST: FEIR – COMMENT LETTER***Westford West Realty Trust (Gutierrez)***

Green announced that the purpose of this meeting is to review a draft document from Staff and Staff peer consultants commenting on the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR). Comments are due by Friday, July 9, 2004. Green summarized the draft document. Shaffer referenced the alternative mitigation costs for the two transportation scenarios (pg. 2/4 vol. 1). Shaffer was concerned that the land value for the two alternates is listed as the same. Shaffer felt that this did not give a fair assessment of costs of a Full Build alternative versus the Reduced Build alternative. Shaffer felt that there were a number of misleading items in the document and that the conclusions were also misleading.

Green asked if further comment was needed regarding the Route 110, 310 Littleton Road driveway access because it operates at Level of Service F without the accelerated schedule and at subsequent stages, before stage 6, it only improves to a Level of Service D or E. Green stated that while the Level of Service does improve, it does not improve quickly enough. Khumalo stated that he would integrate Green's idea into the existing paragraph.

Green commented on the Concord/Powers Roads westbound p.m. traffic on Concord Road data (Section 7, pg. 7/10, item G-1), at full build out, including the Route 225 Connector Road, the current scenario shows a 95th percentile queue at 532 feet; at full build out analysis it shows 479 feet, which is less than a 10% reduction. Green suggested that this continues to show a potential hazard on that segment. Khumalo stated that he would forward the issue to the consultants and ask them to reflect the observations of findings in the final letter to the State. Shaffer was concerned with pedestrian safety relating to traffic going by the Netscout building and the lack of sidewalks particularly in light of the s-curve on the driveway. Shaffer felt that the issue should be addressed earlier in the process when traffic reaches certain levels. Hall stated that the Gutierrez Company can prepare a plan which slows traffic down and warns of a pedestrian crossing, as well as formalizing the pedestrian crossing.

Peraner-Sweet asked how firm the commitment was from Mass Highway regarding the design, permitting and reconstruction of the Littleton/Powers Roads intersection. Peraner-Sweet suggested that a paragraph be added to the letter relative to the Board's expectations of what will happen at this intersection if Mass Highway's commitment does not come through. Khumalo stated that he raised that issue with Mass Highway today. The response Khumalo received from Mass Highway was that the District has 100% support behind this project and they would like to show that support by recommending to the EOT Boston office funding for this project. Khumalo stated that the District was very confident that the recommendation would be supported by the Boston office. Woods stated that Mass Highway is targeting the advertisement for the intersection improvements for 2006.

Barrett reported that Mass Highway said they would be putting in a temporary signal at Route 110/225 West and re-striping the roadway. Green noted that the temporary lighting is somewhat new from a conceptual standpoint and not part of the FEIR or the Town's comments. Green asked that the temporary lighting be added to the letter. Woods stated that the Gutierrez Company will be preparing a summary of the new schedule and outlining the commitments made by Mass Highway and will be providing same to the Town and the State as soon as possible.

Peraner-Sweet asked Khumalo to add a footnote stating that SINWM has changed ownership.

Shaffer recommended that the three year monitoring program, or until traffic volume warrants are met and signals installed, whichever occurs later, be in place to collect the data relative to the Route 225 Connector Road and the site driveways. The Board expressed their continued concerns regarding the impact of traffic at certain phases of the build-out of the project. Green suggested adding to the letter a request for monitoring of Phase 3, and that final Segment C, which will support the entire development, needs to be monitored and accelerated, if possible.

Peraner-Sweet asked that specific information be provided to the Town which outlines what is being done to implement the TMA, i.e., what programs have been put in place, are they advertising, have they contracted with a van pool, etc. Woods stated that Westford could ask to be a member of the TMA. The Board concurred. Green suggested a more formal process for the TMA reports should be implemented. Green suggested the need for a more expanded intersection study relative to Section L-1, pg 7/16.

Fahle suggested rearranging the order of the paragraphs in the letter. Fahle also suggested adding language identifying the vernal pool species. Fahle stated that he needed to confirm with the Conservation Administrator that there have been no recent submittals relative to findings of species of special concern on or adjacent to the project area. Because of the wetlands fillings and the location of the Route 225 Connector Road, Fahle also suggested that the Conservation Commission ask the applicant to submit an alternative analysis demonstrating that there are no alternatives to the current layout that would have less impact to wetlands.

Peraner-Sweet suggested that the Board provide comments regarding the treatment plant, sufficient flow and to ensure that there are no violations. Khumalo stated that he would speak to the Board of Health regarding those issues. Peraner-Sweet also suggested language agreeing with the letters from DEP dated March 14, 2004. Shaffer suggested adding a conclusion paragraph to separate the environmental section of the letter.

The Board was in favor of a reduced build alternative and discussed various concerns. Shaffer stated that while he would welcome a reduced build alternative, he was concerned with how it would be implemented and what happens in the future. Shaffer was concerned that a reduced build alternative actually becomes a delayed build leaving less mitigation options. Green felt the Town should comment on the reduced build out alternative. Peraner-Sweet suggested commenting that the Town remains concerned with the level of development on this property and the impact that it will have on the overall town, the infrastructure, community services, etc. Khumalo will draft appropriate language. Shaffer also suggested reinforcing the Board's recommendations on parking structures to reduce overall site impact on impervious surface and increase green space in the development.

The Board made several corrections to typographical errors.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Shaffer, seconded by Fletcher, and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY, to adjourn the meeting.